

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend paragraphs [0003], [0007], [0023], [0067], [0110], [0117], [0125], [0143], [0144], [0146], and [0166]:

[0003] Each of the telescopic mechanism and the tilting mechanism is provided with a clamp/unclamp mechanism so as to adjust the position in the front-rear ~~direction/tilting direction and the tilting~~ angle of the steering wheel as described above. When in such an adjustment, the clamp/unclamp mechanisms of the telescopic mechanism and the tilting mechanism are unclamped once to adjust the front-rear direction/tilting angle in that state, then the mechanisms are clamped again after completing the adjustment.

[0007] The mechanisms for adjusting the position in the front-rear direction and the tilting angle of the steering wheel are used not only when in driving, but also when ~~in getting on/off the car getting in/out of the car~~. This is to make it easier for the driver to get ~~on/off the car in/out of the car~~; the driver just moves the steering wheel to its refuge position at that time. If the steering wheel is to be moved to its refuge position only to get ~~on/off the car in/out of the car~~ such way, what the driver needs to do at that time is just ~~pushing push~~ the steering wheel to the other side using the tilting mechanism. In the steering column apparatus disclosed by the above published GB patent, however, both of the tilting mechanism and the telescopic mechanism must be unclamped together by an operation of the operation handle when in an adjustment of the position of the steering wheel as described above. Consequently, the driver must put out his/her strength to operate the operation handle. In addition, the unclamped telescopic mechanism moves easily. If it moves, it must be adjusted again before starting another drive.

[0023] The fourteenth invention to achieve the above objects is a variation of the steering column apparatus of the ~~thirteenth~~ invention, wherein the tilt head is provided with a second spring for biasing the operation lever for tilt head clamping.

[0067] The column head 31 is provided with a tilt head clamp 41, which clamps/unclamps the tilt head 4 to/from the column head 31. The tilt head 4 supports a single operation lever 7. The grip of this operation lever 7 is disposed apart from the steering wheel 92. Consequently, the driver is prevented ~~to touch~~ from touching the operation lever by accident while operating the steering wheel 92 during a drive, thereby the moving column member 3 or tilt head 4 is prevented from being unclamped unexpectedly. In addition, such a disposition of the operation lever 7 also makes it easier for the driver to operate the switches disposed around the steering wheel 92.

[0110] Fig. 14 shows how the steering wheel 92 is adjusted between two angles denoted by a solid line and a chain line. In this stage, the moving column member 3 is still clamped. Therefore, only the tilting mechanism can be adjusted. The driver, when just getting ~~in/off~~ the car in/out of the car, is required to push the steering wheel 92 forward to make a wider space there. In addition, because the driver can operate the operation lever with a small force easily at this time, it is always easy for the driver to get ~~in/off~~ the car in/out of the car frequently.

** Adjustment of the Front-Rear Direction (Length of the Steering column apparatus)

[0117] When the tilt head clamp 41 is unclamped, the tilt head 4 comes to receive a strong downward force. This is why the tilt head 4 is provided with a strong counter-balance spring 45 so that the tilt head 4 is given a force enough to cancel such a downward force and keep the steering wheel 92 at the top tilting position, thereby making it easier for the driver to get ~~on/off~~ the car in/out of the car.

[0125] The column head 31 is provided with a tilt head clamp 41, which clamps/unclamps the tilt head 4 to/from the column head 31. The tilt head 4 supports a single operation lever 7. The grip of this operation lever 7 is disposed apart from the steering wheel 92. Consequently, the driver is prevented ~~to touch~~ from touching the operation lever by accident when operating the steering wheel 92 during a drive, thereby the moving column member 3 or tilt head 4 is prevented from being unclamped unexpectedly. In addition, such a

disposition of the operation lever 7 also makes it easier for the driver to operate the switches disposed around the steering wheel 92.

[0143] In ~~the state a in which state~~ (a) the operation lever 7 denoted by the two-dot chain line in Figs. 19 and 20 is not pulled yet. Therefore, the operation lever 7, which is energized by the energizing spring 715, is positioned at the clockwise rocking end. And, the projection 71 of the follower lever 714 is pushed to the left and the tilt head 4 is clamped. If the operation lever 7 is pulled toward the steering wheel 92 when adjusting the tilting angle/the position of the telescopic mechanism, the follower lever 714 rocks clockwise around the lever center shaft 72A. Consequently, if the operation lever 7 rocks to the position (b) denoted by the solid line in Figs. 19 and 20, the projection 71 united with the follower lever 714 moves to the right, thereby the tilt head clamp 41 is unclamped.

[0144] If the operation lever 7 shown in Fig. 19/20 moves from the position (a) denoted by a two-dot line to the position (b) denoted by a solid line, the pusher plate 73 united with the follower lever 714 pushes in the pusher rod 77, thereby the column clamp 21 is unclamped. Consequently, both of the tilt head clamp 41 and the column clamp 21 can be unclamped at the same time only by pulling the single operation lever.

[0146] The spring 741 energizes the pusher rod 77 to the left (Fig. 25). The rocking arm 61 that is to be shaft-engaged with the rod at its right tip is energized to rotate clockwise. The rocking force applied to the rocking arm 61 keeps the clamped position of the column clamp shaft 6 (Fig. 24. Note 24). (Note that, however, the directions are reversed in Fig. 24 and Fig. 25, so that the right and left positions are inverted). The inverted positions of the rocking arm 61 at those times are denoted by solid lines.

* Unclamp keeping mechanism *

[0166] If the tilt head clamp 41 is unclamped, the tilt head 4 is forced to face down due to its own weight. This is why the tilt head 4 is provided with a counter-balance strong spring 45 (Fig. 17, Fig. 20). This spring 45 cancels the downward force applied to the tilt head 4. The tilt head 4 may also be provided with another force to keep the steering wheel 92

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at the top tilting position and make it easier for the driver to get ~~on/off the car~~ in/out of the car.